

Franchise Association, International Sign Association, Interwest Energy Alliance, ISSA—the Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association.

ITTA—the Voice of Mid-Size Telecommunications Carriers, Kcnext—The Technology Council of Greater Kansas City, Land Trust Alliance, LIHTC Working Group, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation, Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council (MassTLC), Metals Service Center Institute, Metroplex Technology Business Council, Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA), Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association, National Air Transportation Association, National Association of Electrical Distributors, National Association of Home Builders, National Association of Manufacturers, National Association of State and Local Equity Funds (NASLEF), National Association of State Energy Officials, National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA).

National Automobile Dealers Association, National Biodiesel Board, National Business Aviation Association, National Cable & Telecommunication Association, National Council of State Housing Agencies, National Development Council, National Employment Opportunity Network, National Farmers Union, National Foreign Trade Council, National Housing and Rehabilitation Association.

National Housing Conference, National Housing Trust, National Hydropower Association, National Lime Association (NLA), National Marine Manufacturers Association, National Multi Housing Council, National Propane Gas Association, National Restaurant Association, National Retail Federation, National Rural Housing Coalition, National School Transportation Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Tooling and Machining Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, New Jersey Technology Council, New Markets Tax Credit Coalition, New Mexico Technology Council, NMTC Working Group, North American Die Casting Association, North Carolina Technology Association, Northeast Ohio Software Association, Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Association, Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC), NPES The Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing and Converting Technologies, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, Pittsburgh Technology Council, Precision Machined Products Association.

Precision Metalforming Association, R&D Credit Coalition, Renewable Northwest, Research!America, Rhode Island Manufacturers Association, Roof Coatings Manufacturers Association (RCMA), Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA), Semiconductor Equipment & Materials International (SEMI), Semiconductor Industry Association, Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Silicon Valley Tax Directors Group, Software and Information Industry Association, Software Finance and Tax Executives Council, SPI: The Plastics Industry Trade Association, Tech Council of Maryland, TechAmerica, powered by CompTIA, TechMaine, TechNet, Technology Association of Georgia, Technology Association of Iowa.

Technology Association of Louisville Kentucky, Technology Association of Oregon, Telecommunications Industry Association, The National Pasta Association, The Plastic Pipe and Fittings Association, The State Chamber of Oklahoma, The Wind Coalition, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Union of Concerned Scientists, United Motorcoach Association, United States Council for Inter-

national Business, United States Telecom Association, United Way Worldwide, Utah Technology Council, Volunteers of America, Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA), West Virginia Manufacturers Association, Wisconsin Technology Council, Work Opportunity Tax Credit Coalition.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:15 p.m., with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday I was visited by several hospitals from Chicago. Mount Sinai is an amazing hospital. It originally—you can tell by its name—was founded by Jewish families living in a section of Chicago. The families have moved on. The remaining population is largely African American and Hispanic. It is a very poor neighborhood. It is a violence-ridden neighborhood. But in an amazing show of magnanimity and charity, many of the Jewish families whose ancestors and predecessors predated them and founded this hospital continue to support Mount Sinai. It is a beacon of quality medical care in one of the toughest, meanest neighborhoods in that great city.

They came to speak yesterday, to meet with me. They just merged with another extraordinary hospital, Holy Cross Hospital in Marquette Park. I have a special affection for this hospital because for decades it was run by the Sisters of St. Casimir, a Lithuanian Catholic order of nuns who devoted their lives first to the Lithuanian population that lived in that neighborhood and then, after that population left, to those who came after them, many of them very poor people.

Mount Sinai and Holy Cross merged, and between the two of them, I can't think of better examples of hospitals with a mission to help the poorest people and to make certain they have care that all of us would like to have for our families. They came yesterday to talk to me about the Affordable Care Act.

There are so many speeches on the floor about the Affordable Care Act. Most of them from the other side of the aisle are entirely negative. But there are some things about the Affordable Care Act which were brought to my attention from these two intercity hospitals which I think we should all look at carefully.

First, they are telling me that at these hospitals more people are showing up and paying. In days gone by, many of those who came in for services

were charity cases. The cost of their service was passed on to everyone else. Now, under the Affordable Care Act, many of these lower-income families have health insurance for the first time in their lives.

I have met some of these families, and I know what it means to them. It was several years ago when I was approached by the chairman of the Cook County board, Toni Preckwinkle, the president, and we asked for a waiver from the Obama administration to enroll families in Cook County in the Medicaid portion of the Affordable Care Act before it actually went into effect.

We were given that waiver. We now have 100,000 individuals in Cook County—low-income individuals—who have Medicaid protection.

This Medicaid protection has allowed them to have quality health insurance for the first time in their lives, in many cases, and also it means when they present themselves for care in hospitals, they are paying. They are paying through the Medicaid program rather than coming in as charity cases.

What we are finding as well is that as more and more Americans have the option of health insurance through the Affordable Care Act, the percentage of Americans who are uninsured has gone down. The share of adults without health insurance declined to 13.4 percent last month from 15.6 percent just a few months before. It is an indication of more and more people in America having the peace of mind that comes with health insurance coverage.

I see the Senator from Kentucky is here, and I know he reserved the floor this morning, and I don't want to take his time.

I also want to make the point as well that as we are bringing in more cost savings in health care through the Affordable Care Act, we are seeing the overall increase in health care costs starting to decline and slow down. That is what we were shooting for—more and more accessibility in coverage, more affordability for those who have that coverage and the overall cost in health care systems starting to come down. It is an experiment which is starting to show good results.

Let me add that as proud as I am to have supported this law, it is not perfect. There are things we need to do to improve it and to refine it. We should do those on a bipartisan basis. That is what we are waiting for.

The House of Representatives has now voted—I believe the number is 50 times—to repeal the Affordable Care Act. I hope they have gotten it out of their system and now will sit down with us and work on a bipartisan basis to make it a better law. We can do that and we should do it together.

So I commend this effort to both sides of the aisle—in the Senate as well as in the House—and I hope that we can achieve something that will make a difference.